

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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FM AMCONSUL LAHORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0285

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMCONSUL KARACHI

UNCLAS LAHORE 0021

NEW DELHI FOR TREASURY/CODEL

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIN OVIP PK

SUBJ: MEDIA COVERAGE OF TREASURY/CODEL VISIT TO LAHORE

1. VISIT OF JOINT TREASURY/CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION TO LAHORE AREA JANUARY 6 DREW UNUSUALLY PROMINENT AND FAVORABLE LOCAL MEDIA COVERAGE, FOCUSSED ON INTERVIEW BY DELEGATION LEADER, TREASURY DEPUTY SECRETARY STEPHEN GARDNER, WITH NEWSMEN AT AIRPORT BEFORE DEPARTURE LAHORE.

2. ENGLISH DAILY PAKISTAN TIMES FRONT-PAGED DOUBLE-COLUMN "STAFF REPORTER" ACCOUNT UNDER HEADLINE "PAKISTAN DEVELOPING ECONOMIC STABILITY", HIGHLIGHTING DEPSECY'S FAVORABLE OBSERVATIONS RE PAKISTAN'S ECONOMIC PROSPECTS. ITEMS: "...PAKISTAN WAS DEVELOPING ECONOMIC BALANCE AND STABILITY AND COULD LOOK FORWARD TO AN EVEN BALANCE OF PAYMENTS WHEN ALL PROJECTS AND DEVELOPMENTS CAME TO FRUITION....IT WAS IMPRESSIVE TO FIND A COUNTRY HOPING TO HAVE A FOOD SURPLUS WHEN ALL THE MISFORTUNES OF LAST YEAR OR TWO PLUS DEVELOPMENT OF THE (TARBELA) DAM AND IRRIGATION SYSTEM WERE COMPLETED....MOST IMPRESSED BY THE ECONOMIC POTENTIAL HERE."

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3. PAKTIMES STORY QUOTES DEPSECY'S EXPLANATION THAT MISSION WAS ONLY LOOKING AT WORLD BANK AND ADB FINANCED PROJECTS, THAT CONGRESSMEN "WERE GETTING THEIR OWN OPINIONS OF WHAT WAS GOING ON IN PAKISTAN WITH AMERICAN PARTICIPATION IN THESE PROJECTS", AND THAT TREASURY REPRESENTATIVES SAT ON BOARDS OF THESE BANKS. HE WAS IMPRESSED BY SENIOR OFFICIALS IN THE GOVERNMENT "AND THEIR ATTITUDES AND UNDERSTANDING OF DIFFICULTIES AND OPTIMISM ABOUT OVERCOMING THEM DESPITE MANY SETBACKS AND NATURAL DISASTERS." IT WAS "VERY COMPELLING...TO SEE THAT SENIOR OFFICIALS ARE ENTHUSIASTIC, COMPETENT AND WORKING VERY HARD TOWARD SOLUTION OF THESE PROBLEMS."

4. STORY CONCLUDES WITH DEPSECY'S RESPONSE TO NEWSMAN'S COMMENT THAT PEACE IN REGION "COULD NOT BE ACHIEVED WITHOUT A MILITARY BALANCE" FOR WHICH "RESUMPTION OF ARMS SUPPLY TO PAKISTAN WAS ESSENTIAL." DEPSECY REPLIED THAT THIS WAS "A KEY QUESTION", BUT A MATTER WHICH CONCERNED DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND NOT RELATED TO THIS MISSION.

5. FIVE LEADING LAHORE VERNACULAR DAILIES (NAWA-I-WAQT, MUSAWAT, IMROZE, MASHRIQ AND WAFAQ) FEATURED APP OR PPI PRESS SERVICE STORIES VIRTUALLY IDENTICAL WITH PAKTIMES VERSION. (WAFAQ OMITTED COMMENT RE MILITARY SUPPLY.) ALL SIX PROMINENTLY DISPLAYED ONE OR MORE PHOTOS OF GROUP ON ARRIVAL OR VISITING SITES.

6. LAHORE TV SAME EVENING BROADCAST FILM CLIP OF MISSION'S VISIT TO D-H FERTILIZER PLANT. RADIO PAKISTAN REPORTED MISSION S ACTIVITIES MORNING JANUARY 6. SELECTIONS FROM GARDNER PRESS CONFERENCE SCHEDULED TO BE BROADCAST JANUARY 10 OVER POPULAR PAK RADIO "DATELINE INTERNATIONAL" WEEKLY NEWS SUMMARY.

7. FYI: PROMINENT DISPLAY AND CONSISTENCY OF NEWS COVERAGE GREATLY FACILITATED BY USIS TAPING, TRANSCRIPTION AND PROMPT DISTRIBUTION OF PRESS CONFERENCE TRANSCRIPT TO WIRE SERVICES AND EDITORS. SPENGLER

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